

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

Please amend claims 1, 8, 11, 18, 25, 28, 35, 40, and 43, as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a x-ray image, comprising:  
collecting a first x-ray image and a second x-ray image;  
determining a composite image based on the first and second x-ray images;  
collecting a third x-ray image, wherein the first and the third x-ray images comprise images of a same portion of an object; and  
adjusting the third x-ray image based on the composite image.
2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images are generated in a sequence.
3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images each contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing an image averaging on the first and second x-ray images.
5. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.

6. (Original) The method of claim 4, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.
7. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the adjusting comprises subtracting the composite image from the third x-ray image.
8. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a x-ray image, comprising:
  - means for collecting a first x-ray image and a second x-ray image;
  - means for determining a composite image based on the first and second x-ray images;
  - means for collecting a third x-ray image, wherein the first and the third x-ray images comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
  - means for adjusting the third x-ray image based on the composite image.
9. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the means for determining a composite image comprises means for performing an image averaging on the first and second x-ray images.
10. (Original) The system of claim 8, wherein the means for adjusting comprises means for subtracting the composite image from the third x-ray image.
11. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a set of stored instructions, the execution of which causes a process to be performed, the process comprising:
  - collecting a first x-ray image and a second x-ray image;
  - determining a composite image based on the first and second x-ray images;

collecting a third x-ray image, wherein the first and the third x-ray images comprise images of a same portion of an object; and

adjusting the third x-ray image based on the composite image.

12. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images are generated in a sequence.

13. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the first, second, and third x-ray images each contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.

14. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing an image averaging on the first and second x-ray images.

15. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.

16. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 14, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.

17. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 11, wherein the adjusting comprises subtracting the composite image from the third x-ray image.

18. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a x-ray image, comprising:

collecting one or more x-ray images;  
determining a composite image based on the one or more x-ray images;  
collecting an input x-ray image, wherein the one or more x-ray images and the input x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and  
enhancing a feature of the input x-ray image based on the composite image.

19. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the collecting the one or more x-ray images comprises generating the one or more x-ray images in a sequence.

20. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the input x-ray image contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.

21. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing an image averaging on the one or more x-ray images.

22. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.

23. (Original) The method of claim 21, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.

24. (Original) The method of claim 18, wherein the enhancing comprises subtracting the composite image from the input x-ray image.

25. (Currently Amended) A system for processing an image, comprising:
- means for collecting one or more x-ray images;
  - means for determining a composite image based on the one or more x-ray images;
  - means for collecting an input x-ray image, wherein the one or more x-ray images and the input x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
  - means for enhancing a feature of the input x-ray image based on the composite image.
26. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the means for determining a composite image comprises means for performing an image averaging on the one or more x-ray images.
27. (Original) The system of claim 25, wherein the means for enhancing comprises means for subtracting the composite image from the input x-ray image.
28. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a set of stored instructions, the execution of which causes a process to be performed, the process comprising:
- collecting one or more x-ray images;
  - determining a composite image based on the one or more x-ray images;
  - collecting an input x-ray image, wherein the one or more x-ray images and the input x-ray image comprise images of a same portion of an object; and
  - enhancing a feature of the input x-ray image based on the composite image.

29. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the collecting the one or more images comprises generating the one or more x-ray images in a sequence.
30. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the input x-ray image contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.
31. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the determining a composite image comprises performing an image averaging on the one or more x-ray images.
32. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 31, wherein the image averaging is performed using a boxcar averaging technique.
33. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 31, wherein the image averaging is performed based on a weighted average.
34. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 28, wherein the enhancing comprises subtracting the composite image from the input x-ray image.
35. (Currently Amended) A method of processing a x-ray image, comprising:  
obtaining a first x-ray image;  
obtaining a second x-ray image, wherein the first and the second x-ray images are obtained using x-ray having an energy level; and

determining a composite image based on at least a portion of the first and second x-ray images.

36. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the first and second x-ray images are generated in a sequence.

37. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the first and second x-ray images each contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.

38. (Original) The method of claim 35, wherein the determining a composite image comprises subtracting at least a portion of the first x-ray image from at least a portion of the second x-ray image.

39. (Original) The method of claim 35, further comprising determining a value associated with a contrast of the composite image.

40. (Currently Amended) A system for processing a x-ray image, comprising:

means for obtaining a first x-ray image;

means for obtaining a second x-ray image, wherein the first and the second x-ray images are obtained using x-ray having an energy level; and

means for determining a composite image based on at least a portion of the first x-ray image and at least a portion of the second x-ray image.

41. (Original) The system of claim 40, wherein the means for determining a composite image comprises means for subtracting at least a portion of the first x-ray image from at least a portion of the second x-ray image.

42. (Original) The system of claim 40, further comprising means for determining a value associated with a contrast of the composite image.

43. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium having a set of stored instructions, the execution of which causes a process to be performed, the process comprising:

obtaining a first x-ray image;

obtaining a second x-ray image, wherein the first and the second x-ray images are obtained using x-ray having an energy level; and

determining a composite image based on at least a portion of the first and second x-ray images.

44. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the first and second x-ray images are generated in a sequence.

45. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the first and second x-ray images each contains an image of at least a portion of an animal body.



46. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the determining a composite image comprises subtracting at least a portion of the first x-ray image from at least a portion of the second x-ray image.

47. (Original) The computer readable medium of claim 43, wherein the process further comprising determining a value associated with a contrast of the composite image.